

KING COUNTY LANDMARKS COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, September 27, 2012

7:00 p.m. – 9:55 p.m.

Penny Farcy Training Center

10019 SW Bank Road

Vashon, Washington

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Lauren McCroskey, Chair; Tom Hitzroth, Vice Chair; Rick Chouinard; Lorelea Hudson; Brian Rich; Lynette Weber

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Kji Kelly; Thaisa Way

STAFF PRESENT: Julie Koler; Todd Scott; Charlie Sundberg

GUESTS PRESENT: See attached list

CALL TO ORDER: Chair McCroskey called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m. She welcomed members of the public in attendance and asked individual commissioners to introduce themselves.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Commissioner Hitzroth moved to approve the August 23, 2012 minutes as submitted. The motion passed unanimously.

CLG REVIEW OF NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATIONS: Julie Koler distributed a staff report on two King County landmarks that were nominated to the National Register of Historic Places by staff: the Nelson-Parker House in Woodinville and Si View Park in North Bend. She explained that one of the requirements for a certified local government is to review and comment on nominations for properties that are located within the Commission's jurisdiction. Rich moved to support listing of both properties in the NRHP. The motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARING: *Vashon Center Historic District Landmark Nomination*

McCroskey gave an overview of the public hearing process then asked for the staff report. Koler gave an overview of the landmark designation process followed by a staff report accompanied by a Powerpoint presentation. She said the district was nominated by Duane Dietz, an island resident. She showed a slide of the proposed boundaries for the district, and identified the period of significance as 1884 to 1946. She noted two corrections to the staff report that was included in the commission's packet: there are three vacant parcels rather than two, and three non-historic buildings, not four.

She indicated that the commission could make a decision tonight or decide additional information is required and continue the meeting to another date. The commission is required to identify the boundaries of the district and make specific findings of eligibility related to the criteria in the King County code. The commission will also need to define features of significance, which are those aspects of the property that will be regulated. Features of significance will not include interiors, but may include landscape features, and will most likely include all building exteriors. She further explained that two existing projects, the Vashon Allied Arts performing arts center and the LS

Cedar lumberyard are vested projects meaning that if the district is designated as a landmark the Commission would not have authority to regulate the work related to these permits.

Koler then described alterations that have been made to buildings since the nomination was submitted: a sign painted on the south exterior wall of the McLean-Anway building and new windows, doors and siding installed on the Center Garage. She said that the work does not appear to impact the integrity of either building, particularly the sign, but that the commission should clarify the extent of changes made to the Center Garage. Koler then clarified the definitions used in the nomination, and how the terms “contributing” and “non-contributing” are applied to features in the district, as well as what a “feature of significance” is.

She said the commission uses National Park Service Bulletin #15 as a guideline for making decisions on landmark eligibility. She stated that a district may include features that have been significantly changed, and that wouldn’t be eligible for designation individually. She used Zarth’s Island Garage as an example of meeting the criterion just through its massing and form. She said that Center appears to be the only historic crossroads in King County that maintains integrity, and thus it is a rare intact example of its type.

She said the recommended features of significance are:

- Oddfellows, Fuller Store, Red Sheds (2), McLean-Anway (both sections), Center Garage, Therkelsen’s Dairy Shed: all exterior features and orientation on lot
- Zarth’s: form and massing, orientation on lot
- Roads and parking areas: paved street width, alignment and grade; graveled shoulders; and parking areas
- Vegetation: two mature black walnut trees between Fuller Store and Vashon Highway
- Vacant and undeveloped land for all parcels: new construction only

Koler further said that the district is nominated under criterion A1 for its association with broad patterns of settlement, development and commerce on Vashon Island; and under criterion A3 because it contains Vashon’s largest surviving concentration of vernacular wood-frame commercial buildings pre-dating 1947. At this point she turned the presentation over to Charlie Sundberg, staff landscape architect and planner, for more detail on application of the designation criteria.

Sundberg discussed the criteria used to assess whether or not the district is eligible for landmark designation. He said that integrity is about the ability of a resource to convey its historic associations. He said that buildings change over time, but can still retain their critical character. He said we’re not concerned about individual significance, but the district as a whole. Sundberg briefly described the seven aspects of integrity, and noted that some changes, such as moving the top floor of the McLean-Anway store, do not diminish integrity if they occurred during the historic period. He said that, as Bulletin 15 notes in regard to broad patterns of history, we’re less concerned about intact physical materials or accurate designs specific to the historic period. There doesn’t need to be a 90% attainment rate, but a judgment call about the relative integrity of the district as a whole. In setting boundaries, staff initially considered the larger area as submitted in the nomination, but there were too many changes at the edges, so they felt it was critical to

consider primarily the crossroads and the area immediately around the intersection. He briefly described the non-contributing properties and vacant parcels and noted that while the nomination identifies the vacant parcels as non-contributing, staff believes they should be contributing because they are significant aspects of the open character of the district. He briefly discussed the changes to individual properties within the district, including the roadways.

Sundberg also mentioned changes in land use during the historic period, noting that the surrounding area was initially raw, cleared land, that had supported a series of agricultural crops, from hay pasture, row crops and vegetable gardens to berry and small fruit orchards, with periods of non-cultivation, and that the areas around buildings had been open dirt and/or gravel. He noted that these varying states are visible in aerial photos and that the current vacant and overgrown state of many lots or parts of lots is consistent with a rural setting and not a loss of integrity.

Sundberg briefly detailed changes to integrity among the contributing properties, including some changes to the roof and fenestration of the ground floor of the McLean-Anway Store, some of the fenestration of the second floor of the Store, changes to the front elevation of Zarth's Island Garage, changes and recent restoration of the Center Garage, and the lack of changes to the Fuller Store and Red Sheds. He concluded that as a district, the siting, form and massing, relationship to the roads and rural setting remained, as did other aspects relevant to the integrity of the whole. Even though some individual buildings had undergone some changes over time, the district as a whole retains integrity.

Koler distributed a summary of the written comments submitted as of this morning and passed out another letter that was submitted at tonight's meeting. She noted that while several letters focus on Vashon Allied Arts' proposed performing arts center, the commission cannot take this into account in its deliberations. It must focus on the existing buildings. She said that the commission could reconsider the eligibility of the district as a whole after the arts center is constructed.

She further noted that a number of the comments focus on the integrity of some of the buildings. She said that since the Drydock/Old Trading Post building has had significant alterations and additions and the historic form and materials are no longer visible staff identified it as a non-contributing feature, although the nomination identifies it as a contributing building. Koler said that the commission could consider excluding the Drydock/Old Trading Post building because it is on the edge of the district. Further she said that commissioners could also consider excluding the LS Cedar Lumberyard property since it has a number of non-contributing features and no contributing features. She said that the heart of the district would still be largely intact. Koler said that if there are substantive changes to any of the buildings that are not identified in the nomination that those changes need to be identified for the record.

McCroskey opened the public hearing and asked if the applicant would like to make a brief presentation. He was not in attendance so she then invited property owners to comment. (Twenty-two people testified in opposition to the designation; two people testified in favor.)

1. Loren Sinner, owner of LS Cedar Lumberyard, stated he has been on the island since 1982. He said all of the owners within the district believe in the integrity of the district but want to be left alone. He feels the lumberyard has never been significant and is opposed to designation.

2. Ron Mitchell, owner of the Drydock/Old Trading Post building, is familiar with historic preservation in other locations. He said there are lots of costs and layers of bureaucracy associated with any preservation project. He is opposed to the designation because it makes the district unusable...owners will be unable to develop their properties. He urged the commission to deny the nomination. Mitchell also indicated that preservation requirements for a Pioneer Square project he is familiar with resulted in an additional \$250,000 in costs and six months in time. He later stated that there are inadequacies in the nomination, and if the commission continues the meeting it would effectively be giving the author a second chance.
3. Jim Stewart, owner of the Roasterie, thanked Duane Dietz for preparing the nomination. However, he said that all but one owner within the district do not want it designated. He said that the historic qualities of Center are no more significant than anything else on the island. He said that the commission wants (via designation) what the owners have already been doing.
4. Molly Reed, director of Vashon Allied Arts, said that the organization has been an excellent steward of the Blue Heron building, which is a designated landmark. She understands that the performing arts center project is vested, but doesn't want future stewards of the new building to be subject to additional regulations. The organization is also planning a sculpture garden in another phase of development and they don't want that regulated. Later, she asked if the county code trumps the NPS bulletin.
5. Lorne McConachie, a Seattle architect representing Vashon Allied Arts, referenced the landmarks ordinance and said that he believes all properties must meet all of the criteria. He said the staff recommendation does not address the aspects of feeling, design and workmanship. He further described how each property failed to meet the criteria - as outlined in a letter he had previously submitted. He said that the lone exception is the Fuller Store. Mr. McConachie said that the district has lost a sense of its rural roots, that the rural geography has been eroded, and that there is no context for this historic node.
6. Donna Klemka asked what restrictions would be placed on vacant parcels within the district. Koler said that the parcels don't have to remain vacant, but any proposed new construction would be reviewed by the commission. Klemka said she was in favor of the designation and feels the district meets the eligibility criteria. She said she doesn't think that all owners in the district are respectful of its history.
7. Gordon Millar said that the purpose of landmarking is not to keep the current owners under control; it's to prevent future owners from tearing down buildings. He did not specifically state whether he supported or opposed the designation.
8. Peter Mantle asked about the impact of designation on the owners. McCroskey responded that designation would provide recognition for the area, incentives for rehabilitation, and a chance to think thoughtfully about any changes to the buildings. Commissioner Rich added that certain types of proposed changes would be reviewed by the commission's design review committee for appropriateness. Mantle later questioned whether one individual should have

the right to nominate an entire district. Koler responded that the King County Code provides that anyone may submit a landmark nomination.

9. Tim Roden said that this is a case of he-said/she-said, and that the hearing shouldn't even be taking place because the district doesn't meet the integrity requirements. He also believes the owners will take care of their buildings.
10. Rick Wallace thanked the commission for coming to Vashon. He said he doesn't believe the district meets the spirit or technical requirements for landmark designation. Zarth's is out of period due to significant changes made after the 1948 explosion and fire. He said that the parapet is different from the original. The east side of the district doesn't meet the same criteria that the Odd Fellows Hall meets, so it should be excluded. Wallace also pointed out that there is nothing critical about hearing the designation now; it could be heard a year from tonight, and staff or the commission could ask for a more accurate nomination.
11. Marjorie Lund identified herself as a structural engineer and said that Vashon Allied Arts asked her to look at the McFeed's (Zarth's) building about four years ago to make an assessment about whether it could be adaptively re-used. She believes it is structurally unsound and not a type worth maintaining.
12. Bruce Morser said he is a Vashon Allied Arts board member and that he does not support designation of the district. He said that Center was historically a balance of commerce, rural and civic (schools, churches) entities and that balance no longer remains. It is now just commerce.
13. Laurie Geissinger said she supports the district designation. She said that remarks at the hearing have overstated the regulations for designation. She said that property owners will change, and the buildings themselves will change over time.
14. Jeanne Dougherty said the nomination was made by one person who didn't show up for the hearing. There were no meetings with owners and no involvement with the historical society. She feels this has been an attempt to throw a monkey wrench into the performing arts center project. She doesn't believe the designation has to occur tonight, or have to include the east side of Vashon Highway. She said there should be better involvement and an attempt to really explain the process, timing, and that it's not a danger to the arts center project.
15. Brian Brenno said he doesn't understand how one person can designate a district. He said he is a board member of the Vashon-Maury Island Heritage Association and they have not endorsed the district.
16. Craig Hanson identified himself as an architect and said he doesn't believe the district has enough integrity to qualify as a landmark. He said that National Park Service Bulletin #15 states that a component can't be included if it has been significantly altered. Since Zarth's has changed significantly, along with the McLean-Anway Building, that leaves only one corner of the intersection with any integrity remaining. He said that gravel-sided roads are all over the island, so the ones in Center aren't particularly significant.

17. Richard Reed said he reviewed the nomination closely and researched the designation process. He said there is insufficient integrity for the district and that the staff report has inaccuracies and omissions. He said he submitted comments to the commission and hopes that it will consider his recommendations and not designate the district.
18. Angela Luechtefeld said that the statement that district designation will have no bearing on the performing arts center is false. The organization is still fundraising for the project and this action could negatively impact their efforts to raise the remaining \$7 million needed.
19. Kirk Robinson said that most Islanders take care of their properties. He has enjoyed working with staff on other issues surrounding the performing arts center, but he believes the district has been gerrymandered and is not a cohesive district. Even though the performing arts center and lumberyard projects have been permitted and can't be considered during this hearing, he feels any discussion ignoring them is inappropriate. This intersection is a changing streetscape. He also reminded the commission that there are no letters of support for the district. He feels the process of obtaining certificates of appropriateness for designated landmarks is a big obstacle and a burden for the owners. He later asked whose job is it to obtain answers to the unclear information in the nomination. Koler responded that it would be staff's responsibility but they would work with the author of the nomination since he has done significant research on the district.
20. Hillary Emmer stated that islanders like to be heard and they don't want a group of people telling them what to do.
21. Denise Katz asked if there were any statistics that show what happens to property values once a district is designated. McCroskey responded that she wished there were a good answer, but there are no statistics for King County and no consensus nationwide.
22. Nancy Sipple indicated she had previously owned the Steen House (a designated county landmark) and she was advised that when it was designated the property values would go down and it would be harder to sell. She said that that occurred when she finally did sell the house. She later asked if the commission didn't feel there was strong enough information to deny the nomination.
23. Kristine Wilson thanked the commission for coming to Vashon. She said she disagrees with the application of NPS Bulletin 15. It's there only to speak to things that are vague or ambiguous and this is not vague or ambiguous. She said she doesn't believe the district meets the criteria nor does she believe that Zarth's is a building type worth preserving. She said all criteria have to be met. She said there is a lack of continuity in the district, and that findings for designation should be tougher for a district.
24. Mary Park asked if additional information would be shared with the public.

McCroskey said that all nominations must be considered by the commission and that districts don't have to meet every aspect of integrity. She asked commissioners to consider the arguments for excluding the lumberyard and the drydock building. She said she recommends that those two

properties be excluded from the boundaries. She then opened the floor to discussion by the commissioners.”

Chouinard said for the record that he stopped at the Center Garage to look at recent changes to the building and had a conversation with the owner, Bob Siebold. Chouinard said he has issues with the integrity of the district as a whole.

McCroskey called a recess for a short break. The meeting resumed at 9:37. McCroskey closed the hearing to public comment, and indicated that a continuation of the hearing is needed to clarify information on building modifications and to obtain a legal ruling on the code regarding whether all aspects of integrity must be met. Hitzroth agreed that clarification was needed. Koler stated that it was also important to meet with all the property owners prior to another meeting. Hudson and Chouinard concurred. Chouinard also stated the commission didn’t have to rush into a decision.

Koler said that commissioners could choose to continue the hearing leaving the record open for public comment or close it and continue a decision to a later date pending clarification of the points raised tonight. She suggested continuing the hearing to November 15th.

McCroskey asked for consensus from the commission on whether to leave the record open for public comment or to close it. Several members of the audience suggested closing the comment period. Rich stated that if the record is left open, people could respond to new information received. Commissioner Hudson said she doesn’t need more information; she just wants clarification on the issues that were raised. Koler suggested that the commission make a motion to continue the hearing to November 15.

McCroskey said she would entertain a motion to continue the hearing in order to obtain a legal opinion on the application of the criterion on integrity; directing staff to meet with property owners and to clarify information on certain buildings that is contained in the nomination. Hitzroth made the motion and it passed unanimously.

OTHER BUSINESS: None

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 9:55 p.m.

King County Landmark Commission Minutes
September 27, 2012

LIST OF ATTENDEES:

Fred Albert
Steve Amsden
Greg Antoine
Karen Baer
Tom Baker
Jo Ann Bardeen
Darsie Beck
Mark Bennion
David Bolin
Brian Brenno
Leslie Brown
Steve Brown
Judith Burwell
Mary Carhart
Whit Carhart
Colleen Carrette
J.R. Crawford
John de Groen
Jeanne Dougherty
Kirstin Eastman
Hilary Emmer
John & Marita Erickson
Joe Farmer
Geraldine R. Feinstein
Michael Feinstein
Wendy Finkleman
Laurie Geissinger
Craig L. Hanson
Bruce Haulman
Heather Houston
Alan Huggins
Amy Huggins
Kathi Jenkins
Denise Katz
Kathleen Kinney
Donna Klemka
Martin Koenig
Susan Kutscher
Dwayne Langland
June Langland
Angela Luechtefeld
Marjorie Lund
Janice Mallman

Leah Mann
Peter Mantle
Jim Marsh
Paul Martinez
Anna Martinsen
Nick Martinsen
Norine Martinsen
Lorne McConachie
Lara McKnight
Kevin McMurdo
Gordon Millar
Ron & Deb Mitchell
Bruce Morser
Anne O'Leary
Brian O'Leary
John Overton
Lark Pelling
Janice Randall
Molly Reed
Richard D. Reed
Kathleen Rindge
Kirk Robinson
Tim Roden
Renee Roman
Bob Siebold
Evah Simmons
Loren Sinner
Gary & Nancy Sipple
Tom Skarshaug
Steve Steffens
James Stewart
Luz Marina Trujillo
Jill Vennri
Rick Wallace
Chuck Weinstock
Kay White
Rich Wiley
Faye Wilkinson
Kristine Wilson
Rebecca Wittman
William Wood
Ken Zaglin